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Meeting the challenge: the role of UNDP in crisis, post-conflict and recovery situations, 2000-2003

Report of the Administrator

Introduction

1. The present document builds on the Administrator's Business Plans submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session 2000 (DP/2000/8). It results in part from extensive consultations with partners — governmental, United Nations and non-governmental. It is presented in the context of the UNDP commitment to work with partners to provide reliable, coherent support to programme countries in special development situations, including in the post-conflict and recovery periods.

2. The purpose of the report is to inform the Executive Board of the progress that UNDP has made in implementing relevant Board decisions and to seek the Board's support in mapping out a strategy to become a more effective actor and partner in this challenging environment.

3. Underpinning the report are a number of commitments made by the Administrator, including:

(a) To respect and build on the mandate of UNDP as a development agency committed to the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of human development;

(b) To develop strategic partnerships within and beyond the United Nations system to strengthen the coherence of international support for programme countries;

(c) To ensure that core resources are not diverted to post-conflict or post-disaster activities, beyond the Board's decision to establish target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.3 and that any expanded activities in this area are financed exclusively from non-core resources.

4. The report is informed by the need for UNDP to focus exclusively on those areas that draw on the organization's comparative advantages, that contribute to the conflict prevention and disaster-reduction capacities of the United Nations and of the international community, particularly at the country level, and that respond to the needs and demands of programme countries.

I. Context

5. Despite progress in many societies, the last decade has witnessed a series of conflicts and natural disasters that have afflicted a growing number of vulnerable countries around the world. These man-made and natural disasters have destroyed decades of development, creating massive social and economic dislocation. This has brought a dramatic rise in civilian

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casualties, refugees and internally displaced populations and the collapse of state and civil society institutions. The vast majority of current conflicts are in the developing world, where they hurt the poorest most of all. In addition, societies recovering from violence are most vulnerable to falling back into conflict again.

6. Natural disasters — whether they are part of a natural cycle, or have been triggered by man-made environmental degradation — also appear to have increased in incidence. Their impact on lives and property has also grown significantly as populations continue to grow. Protracted environmental degradation, including deforestation and desertification, the continued increase in greenhouse gases, the production of ozone-depleting substances, and inappropriate waste disposal have resulted in climate change and a trend towards an increase in the incidence and relative severity of natural disasters and a perilous deterioration of water quality. In his address at the Second World Water Forum, held in March 2000, the Chairman of the World Commission on Water for the 21st Century, pointed to one estimate that suggests, for example, that in 1999 the land and water crisis in river basins contributed to the total of 25 million environmental refugees, for the first time exceeding the number of war-related refugees.

7. Chronic poverty exacerbates vulnerability to crises and disaster. Many current crises have lasted for years, even decades, in some cases spreading to destabilize entire subregions. Similarly, in many countries natural disasters are not restricted to occasional large catastrophes that "interrupt development" but have become a permanent and perennial problem deeply embedded in development patterns at the community, national and subregional levels.

8. Lost development gains are a tragic reality. In sub-Saharan Africa, one of the regions most affected by natural disasters and complex emergencies, the percentage of population living below the poverty line has increased from 38 per cent in 1987 to 39 per cent in 1997 (see *Human Development Report* (HDR) 1997). Between 1981 and 1998, the region saw a cumulative decline of 21 per cent in real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (HDR 1999). Total losses in the Central American countries worst hit by Hurricane Mitch in 1998 were estimated at $6,018 million, representing 13 per cent of the 1997 GDP of the region. In Mozambique, the floods caused by Cyclone Eline have affected 1.9 million people and displaced 300,000, reversing eight years of economic growth. Countries such as Haiti and Sierra Leone have seen their human development index drop from 0.209 and 0.354 in 1992 to 0.185 and 0.335, respectively, in 1998 (HDR 1998). In response to these crises, humanitarian assistance as a share of declining ODA has increased from 3 per cent to nearly 9 per cent between 1988 and 1998.

9. These alarming trends have forced consideration of the so-called gap between relief and development. The United Nations and the international community are seeking to assure a coherent handover from humanitarian relief to development efforts for long-term recovery. The growing cost and only partial success of relief and recovery efforts have focused greater interest on crisis prevention — an area identified as a key priority for the United Nations by the Secretary-General, who noted in his address to World Bank staff on 19 October 1999 that "[i]f war is the worst enemy of development, healthy and balanced development is the best form of conflict prevention." The Security Council's open debate in late November 1999 on conflict prevention has been a major development in support of the Secretary General's call for the articulation of a comprehensive long-term United Nations preventive strategy involving all the major organs, specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system.

10. Nevertheless, the policy, practice and funding of the United Nations system remain inadequate for crisis prevention. The backdrop is the increasing number of actors involved — multilateral, governmental and non-governmental. The general tendency of the United Nations system and the international community has been to respond to crises with a range of military, political and humanitarian means. Although such support is critically important, it often comes at the expense of long-term development. Humanitarian assistance too often does not address either continuing risks and vulnerabilities or recovery opportunities. Further, it diverts scarce national and international resources from capacity-building for sustainable human development, to which donor and programme countries are committed. In these situations, support is urgently required that averts crises, addresses immediate humanitarian situations and extends well beyond to sustainable recovery.

II. UNDP response

11. As the incidence of special development situations has continued to increase and the diversity of their underlying causes has broadened, pressures have grown on UNDP and the world community to respond to them in a more effective and sustainable manner. Most requests for assistance to UNDP come from programme countries struggling to recover from conflict and natural disaster.

UNDP mandates

12. States Members of the United Nations have, over the years, established a clear mandate for UNDP and development agencies to act in special development situations. General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 established the central importance of development in the midst of emergencies (annex, paras. 9-10). This theme was further elaborated in the report of the Secretary-General on field coordination (A/49/177-E/1994/8). The centrality of development concerns is also implicit in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform" (A/51/950 and Add.1-7) and the corresponding resolutions of the General Assembly (resolutions 52/12 A and B). The Executive Board further translated these mandates into reality by recognising that preventive and curative development must often be addressed simultaneously in the midst of crises, and, for the first time, in its decision 95/23, set aside 5 per cent of UNDP core resources in line 1.1.3 for the purpose. Core United Nations mandates in the areas of natural disasters and mine clearance have also recently been delegated to UNDP in paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 52/12 A and in General Assembly resolution 53/26 respectively. UNDP acts in these areas in close coordination with programme countries.

13. The resident coordinator system, funded and managed by UNDP, also continues to have a clear role in the coordination of operational activities in special development situations. While General Assembly resolutions 32/197, 42/196, 44/211, 47/168, 48/209 and in particular 47/199, provide the overall framework for the coordination of operational activities, the General Assembly, in the annex to resolution 46/182, further affirmed that the Resident Coordinator "should normally coordinate the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system at the country level. He/she should facilitate the preparedness of the United Nations system and assist in a speedy transition from relief to development". The UNDP coordination role in countries in special development situations was further strengthened in the Secretary-General's programme of reform, under the terms of which the Administrator became a member of the Executive Committees for Humanitarian Affairs and Peace and Security in addition to his appointment as chairman of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) (resolutions 52/12 A and B).

Achievements

14. In response, UNDP has made considerable headway in reorganizing and redirecting its efforts and resources to address these important mandates.

15. **Commitment to coordination.** Considerable effort has been placed on supporting the coordination of aid in special development situations. In addition to the funding of the day-to-day activities of the Resident Coordinator, UNDP has provided support to the preparation and convening of round-table meetings and to the preparation of Consolidated Appeals led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). UNDP also convenes and manages disaster management teams within country. With its key partners, UNDP has supported the preparation, management and implementation of strategic frameworks and other development, rehabilitation and reconstruction plans as well as sectoral and thematic studies and project-identification exercises. In a wide range of countries, UNDP projects have strengthened the technical and management capacity of national aid-management and coordination bodies, as well as the delivery capacity of national units. Information technology support to coordination platforms is also an important emerging UNDP service to programme countries and to the international community. The most recent example of UNDP support for the coordination for recovery is in Mozambique, where the Government has asked UNDP to organize a donor-coordination meeting to mobilize resources for a framework for sustainable recovery and vulnerability reduction. In such cases, UNDP acts in concert with other key international actors.

16. Within the wider UNDG, complementary measures have been implemented to improve

coordination processes. These include the development of standard job descriptions for resident coordinators that also cover humanitarian functions (currently 11 resident coordinators simultaneously serve as humanitarian coordinators) as well as the involvement of humanitarian agencies, including OCHA, in the resident coordinator selection process. Other activities include the revision of common country assessment (CCA) United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) guidelines to improve relief, reconstruction and development linkages (for example, through the introduction of risk-assessment and vulnerability components). In Kosovo and East Timor, UNDG is also testing alternative models of development coordination, such as the United Nations Development Coordinator concept.

17. **Management changes.** UNDP has made a number of organizational, management and policy changes in response to special development situations, principally in establishing the Emergency Response Division (ERD). The Division oversees funds from TRAC line 1.1.3, ensuring effective and coherent action at the corporate level, working through regional bureaux to reinforce country offices dealing with special development situations. ERD also manages the increasingly important work of UNDP with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Executive Committees for Humanitarian Affairs and Peace and Security established by the Secretary-General.

18. A branch of ERD has been established in Geneva to oversee the mandated role of UNDP in natural-disaster prevention and mitigation, as well as to coordinate with humanitarian agencies in Europe. Substantive capacity has been established in ERD — particularly in the areas of natural disasters, mine action, reintegration and post-crisis institutional change and recovery. Procedures for access to funds for immediate response to disasters under TRAC line 1.1.3 have been simplified and lag times shortened. Procedures also have been developed for the use of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as executing agents. A number of models of joint management units have been tested at the country level (e.g., in Cambodia, Honduras and Rwanda) and restructuring of selected country offices to respond better to the demands of recovery programming has become common practice.

19. **Resources.** UNDP has financed its operations in this area using resources from TRAC line 1.1.3, trust funds, cost-sharing and significant volumes of parallel financing that have been generated within UNDP frameworks or programmes. In selected countries in which crisis has been pervasive, UNDP has consulted with national authorities and used TRAC lines 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 resources to address the underlying causes of the crisis.

20. As of the end of February 2000, a total of $150 million had been assigned to 225 projects in 89 countries under TRAC line 1.1.3. (For a detailed assessment see: *The United Nations Development Programme's Response to Countries in Special Circumstances: An Independent Assessment of the Use of TRAC 1.1.3*, prepared for ERD/UNDP, July 1999.) Some regional and interregional programmes and one global programme had also been funded. A total of 75 per cent of TRAC line 1.1.3 resources ($113 million) were assigned to programme response in complex development situations (category I) in 41 countries while 9 per cent ($13 million) was assigned to immediate response to sudden crisis (category II) activities in 68 countries, and 16 per cent ($24 million) was assigned to capacity-building and prevention (category III) activities in 23 countries. Twenty-eight countries received funding in two or more categories. In category I, a total of 24 per cent was allocated to governance projects, 59 per cent to general reintegration and reconstruction, 8 per cent to mine action, and 6 per cent and 3 per cent to demobilization and the preparation of strategic frameworks respectively.

21. The vast majority of activities supported by UNDP in the crisis and post-conflict area have been financed by extrabudgetary contributions, with TRAC line 1.1.3 often playing a key catalytic role. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a UNDP investment of $7.1 million led to an additional $70 million from other donors. In Guatemala, $150 million was mobilized around two programmes to secure follow-up on the peace agreement, core-funded with $6.1 million from TRAC line 1.1.3. A multi-donor programme worth $133.5 million is anticipated for the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP), to be initiated with a total TRAC 1.1.3 allocation of $12.5 million. In Kosovo, after an injection of $2 million from TRAC line 1.1.3, UNDP mobilized $43 million within one year. Rwanda's $8 million allocation from TRAC line 1.1.3 mobilized $112 million. The allocation for Honduras of $700,000 has mobilized $27.3 million and

the $1.3 million allocated to East Timor has already secured donor cost-sharing commitments of more than $15 million.

22. To attract needed non-core resources for these types of operations, UNDP has also established a number of special trust funds. In 1997 and 1998, these funds disbursed over $250 million, as indicated in the interim financial statements for the 12 months ended 31 December 1998. On another level, TRAC 1.1.3 resources attract funds through third-party cost-sharing arrangements — exceeding $46 million to date — and management services agreements. Overall, UNDP has mobilized an average of $175 million annually in non-core funding for projects in countries in special development situations, as noted in *Sharing New Ground in Post-Conflict Situations: The Role of UNDP in Support of Reintegration Programmes*, page 30. Despite these resource mobilization achievements, the demand for this assistance continues to far outstrip the UNDP resource base.

Major activities

23. **Reintegration.** Area-based reintegration programmes have become a UNDP signature product for post-conflict countries and in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and NGOs, they have been replicated in some 25 countries (notably in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Somalia). As noted by the recent evaluation of reintegration programmes, the most successful forms of reintegration assistance provided by UNDP have entailed support to displaced populations as well as the communities into which they are being resettled (see *Sharing New Ground* ...). In addition to service-delivery activities and support to livelihoods, UNDP has developed community-based institutional capacity to manage development and widen participation in decision-making while reducing social friction and conflict. UNDP-supported area-based development programmes have also served as a framework for concerted donor action. Community-based work has further enabled UNDP to undertake development activities in "pockets of peace" when peace has not been fully achieved at the national level and/or even in the absence of a universally recognized government (e.g., in Afghanistan and in Somalia). Community-based institutions have also proven effective for delivering micro-credit and small enterprise development as well as sustainable income generation (e.g., in Cambodia).

24. Successful reintegration programmes have also involved coordination and joint programming with UNHCR, particularly for projects requiring rapid implementation for resettlement and reintegration.

25. The use of national and international United Nations Volunteers for capacity-building at the community level and for social recovery has been a central feature of area development, as has support for national NGO capacity where it does not yet exist.

26. **Policy and institutional development.** Policy and institutional development have played an important part in UNDP programmes in post-conflict situations. This is part of UNDP efforts to address the wish addressed by programme countries to catalyse national pro-poor policy processes. During the fifth programming cycle (1992-1996) programme budgets for these activities in countries in special development situations grew from approximately $50 million to $192 million. UNDP activities in this area included the development of capacity to formulate and implement fiscal, revenue and monetary policies that are geared to re-establishing sound development management and creating conditions for economic growth essential for political and social stability. This is often accompanied by the development of a legislative framework for commerce and investment so private sector growth is undertaken in the best interest of the country. To ensure sustainability, capacity for effective budget preparation and expenditure management has also been strengthened. Such work has often been undertaken in close formal or informal collaboration with the World Bank, regional banks and/or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (e.g., in Cambodia and in Rwanda), who are the key partners in this area.

27. UNDP also has adopted an integrated approach to develop the capacity of the police, courts, judiciary and prison system (e.g., in Haiti and in Rwanda). A growing portfolio for small-arms reduction — integrated into wider development schemes — has made an important contribution in countries such as Albania and Mali. In addition, UNDP has provided support for the development of legal frameworks,

including the development of human rights laws and their enforcement as well as constitutional reforms (e.g., in Georgia).

28. Other UNDP activities in this field include the strengthening of key institutions of government (e.g., in Cambodia), the decentralization of government where appropriate and the strengthening of parliamentary and electoral systems (e.g., in Central America). Efforts have also been made to introduce and develop systems of government accountability.

29. **Natural disasters.** In response to General Assembly resolution 52/12 B and to bring further focus to the UNDP overall strategy and activity in the field of disaster reduction, the Disaster Reduction and Recovery Programme was established as part of ERD in March 1998. At the same time the United Nations Disaster Management Training Programme, previously managed jointly with the former Department of Humanitarian Affairs, was fully integrated into UNDP. Up until the end of 1999, approximately $12.8 million of TRAC 1.1.3 resources has been directed to 29 countries for the purpose of strengthening national disaster-management institutions and training, policy development, strengthening regional cooperation, post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation, enhancing early warning mechanisms and national disaster plans while supporting vulnerability assessment and community awareness. UNDP has also provided significant support to coordinating the development of recovery plans for major disasters in Central America, Turkey, and Venezuela, to name only a few. In Bangladesh, for example, a UNDP-led effort mobilized $223 million after the massive 1998 floods. With an increasing number of man-made disasters, UNDP has also supported such recovery efforts as weapons and waste disposal (in Kazakhstan), oil spills (in Argentina and in Uruguay), and environmental damage following violent conflict (in south-east Europe).

30. **Mine action.** Within the United Nations system, UNDP has been tasked to take the lead on the socio-economic consequences of landmine contamination, and in providing support to local capacity to eliminate the threat they pose to the resumption of normal economic activity, reconstruction and development. To build such capacity, UNDP supports the establishment of management infrastructures and institutional arrangements, develops mine-action programmes, and coordinates training for managers, technical teams and support staff. The UNDP multisectoral approach has permitted it to couple its mine-action programmes with other kinds of assistance, such as infrastructure rehabilitation, rural development and refugee reintegration in the 15 countries currently receiving UNDP support in this field (of the total of 20 United Nations-supported operations). Building on $12 million in resources from TRAC line 1.1.3, these programmes have generated over $70 million through trust funds or cost-sharing arrangements (as of 31 December 1998). UNDP interacts on a daily basis with the United Nations Mine Action Service in this area.

31. Through these multiple steps, UNDP has begun to address the underlying causes of special development situations. Much still needs to be done: UNDP needs to consolidate and strengthen its management of these situations, boosting its own substantive capacity in key areas, including through staff development. More effective corporate systems and networks are needed for resource mobilization and effective partnerships to fill the gap between relief and development. A number of effective patterns of intervention have been defined to address key underlying causes. Further work needs to be done to develop them into consistent products and to equip the organization for new sets of challenges. The momentum to improve UNDP coordination support, particularly within the wider context of UNDG, must also be maintained.

III. Moving forward

A. Guiding principles

32. There is clearly a need to improve UNDP performance in special development situations and to make it a more predictable partner within an increasingly robust, inter-agency framework. UNDP special development operations must be coherent with its overall corporate goals and remain consistent with its policy of strategic engagement with programme countries. It is also clear that additional extrabudgetary resources are required to consolidate and expand these programmes.

33. If well managed, the organization's comparative advantages can be translated into a vital contribution to countries facing special development challenges, by offering to local and international efforts:

- *Continuity* — to the long-term process of peace-building and/or recovery that will see a high turn-

over of actors from inception through to fruition, while UNDP can build on its continuous presence in the country;

- *Complementarity and coordination* — by supporting multidisciplinary and multi-donor frameworks that ensure that all points are covered;
- *Counterparts* — in local and national government, upon whom long-term success depends and whose capacities are the focus of UNDP work;
- *A community-wide approach* — that caters for a wider host community that naturally complements the targeted assistance of partner agencies (i.e., UNHCR for returnees or the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for mothers and children); and above all,
- *Speed and timeliness in response* — given the unparalleled devolution by UNDP of decision-making to its local managers.

B. The way forward

34. UNDP will focus particularly in the future on: (a) strengthening its support to the resident/humanitarian coordinator system; (b) expanding its partnerships with key organizations and agencies; (c) improving preventive activities; (d) consolidating activities both in post-conflict and post-disaster situations under sustainable recovery programmes; and (e) strengthening its own response capacities.

1. Strengthening UNDP support to the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator

35. The key to transforming the international response to crisis from a series of reactive, fragmented actions to a pro-active jumpstart for sustainable recovery is the formulation of a comprehensive approach that integrates prevention, peace-building, relief, rehabilitation and recovery initiatives. UNDP views support to this effort as the most important of its core roles in special development situations.

36. In all countries, UNDP will work through the resident coordinator system, emphasizing: (a) early joint planning and prioritization; (b) demand-driven rather than agency-driven assessments of needs and local capacities; (c) the importance of a clearly agreed division of labour through inter-agency collaboration; and (d) the need for more flexible financing systems for transitional programming. Every effort will be made to support the centrality of national authorities in the management of these processes and to include all international actors in a single, inclusive, participatory approach.

37. Successful collaboration within the resident coordinator system is dependent on a number of key factors:

(a) The extent to which the resident coordinator system is accepted as a shared responsibility among all United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes. This is, in fact, the trend in a growing number of countries, where emphasis is now put on ensuring the synergy that a well-functioning resident coordinator system can stimulate. In these cases, specific needs and services are identified in which joint analysis or action will add value to individual efforts, i.e., those areas in which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts;

(b) The fit between the style of leadership of the Resident Coordinator and the needs and services identified by the country team. In principle, leadership of United Nations country teams should be understood as effective facilitation, i.e., facilitation of processes and the catalysing of joint efforts;

(c) In situations where the Secretary-General has designated a Special Representative or Representative, there is a need for clear responsibilities and appropriate support mechanisms to ensure an efficient division of labour and synergy in United Nations crisis and post-crisis recovery assistance;

(d) The availability of resources to resident coordinators to allow them to take collaborative initiatives, often at short notice — for example, rapid needs assessments and analyses, advocacy work, or programme initiatives in response to rapidly evolving situations.

38. UNDP will work at the inter-agency level to build on progress made in developing common tools and frameworks in this regard, including the CCA, the UNDAF, the United Nations Strategic Framework and the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF). Country teams will be encouraged to use these tools as a starting point but also to innovate to meet the needs of their particular situations.

2. Partnerships

39. In the Administrator's Business Plans, 2000-2003 (DP/2000/8), the need for strategic partnerships is emphasized not only as a dimension of external relations but as a precondition for development effectiveness. Nowhere are strategic partnerships more important — or more challenging — than in crisis, post-conflict and recovery situations. They are important because the outcomes required in such situations are time-bound, multiple and often enormous in scale, requiring action on many fronts simultaneously at a time when thousands of lives may be in peril. These situations are also challenging because the number of actors involved are often too many or too few, with differing agendas and programming cycles. The Administrator, reflecting the whole thrust of United Nations reform, is committed to closer, more substantive partnerships with key international and multilateral actors such as the World Bank and the European Union, as well as non-state actors and civil society organizations in situations where their role is vital.

40. UNDP will intensify ongoing efforts to meet this challenge, both in its own relationships with programme countries and in its resident coordinator role within the United Nations system. In special development situations, UNDP will seek a broad network of strategic partnerships, including with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and OCHA of the United Nations Secretariat, as well as with organizations such as UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The ILO, the International Office of Migration (IOM) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are also increasingly important players and the Bretton Woods institutions are playing a growing role in crisis, especially post-crisis situations. UNDP will seek to become an effective partner with them to facilitate joint work that draws on respective strengths while pursuing longer-term collaboration in areas such as macro-economic stabilization. Joint assessments, planning and collaboration in training (such as the early warning and preventive measures workshops being provided by the Turin Staff College) will be expanded. International and local NGOs, which are frequently implementing partners for the United Nations, as well as civil society groups, the academic community, and the private sector, all have a role to play both in prevention and in post-crisis recovery. UNDP will seek to work with these actors to maximize their contribution and comparative advantages within the context of an overall recovery or preventive strategy. The same applies to regional and subregional organizations, whose role is increasingly being recognized by the United Nations. Finally, the local and international media can also make a constructive contribution to prevention or stabilization.

3. Prevention

41. While UNDP has an expanding portfolio of disaster-mitigation and disaster-preparedness programmes, its activities in crisis and conflict have tended to deal with the period of upheaval and its aftermath. There is a growing realization, however, that early action could contribute to preventing or ameliorating such crises. In close coordination with local and national authorities, steps to promote social and institutional advances can help to keep pre-existing tensions from developing into violent conflict. Such preventive action is an area where programme and donor countries alike are now asking that UNDP strengthen its work. This requires integrating prevention strategies into broader development activities.

42. As a non-political institution that addresses the economic causes of conflict, UNDP will seek primarily to promote institutional and consultative processes at the invitation of local and national authorities, drawing on the long relationship of trust that UNDP enjoys and its knowledge of local conditions. Such processes will usually focus on seeking consensus on central economic, social, political, legal and constitutional issues, while supporting civil society, conflict resolution and reconciliation at the community level. Action taken in partnership with local and national authorities can contribute to peace-building, institutional consolidation and improved public policies. Experience has demonstrated that post-conflict reconstruction often must aim at helping a society to overcome long-standing causes of violence. Programme countries are increasingly asking UNDP to ensure that post-conflict recovery strengthen the rule of law, and establish effective, accountable and transparent public institutions, as well as administrative and economic practices.

43. UNDP now faces the need to develop new methodologies and tools to integrate prevention of

conflict into its programming, as well as to measure the impact of development strategies and projects on reducing the risk of conflict. This work will primarily be designed for countries that have already suffered conflict or are clearly threatened by violence, where social and economic change can be destabilizing. Development and conflict-prevention strategies need to be sensitive to such issues as inequitable distributio of resources, exclusion, burden-sharing, displacement and settlement and their impact on conflict. UNDP will seek in its programmes to indicate how such conditions might be prevented from degenerating into violence. Guidelines, methodologies and training are needed in this area.

44. UNDP will also continue to emphasize prevention in its work in natural disasters. Such disasters disproportionately harm the most vulnerable social groups, already living in precarious conditions brought about by chronic poverty, social and economic exclusion, unplanned urbanization, inadequate planning and population growth. Long-term improvement will come only by incorporating disaster-prevention measures in the regular development strategy of UNDP.

4. Programming for sustainable recovery

45. In the aftermath of a disaster or in a post-conflict situation, the UNDP multisectoral approach, capacity-building work and improved speed of response will be used to develop a country-specific recovery framework, working with other major partners. Drawing on UNDP support to the inter-agency coordination process, these frameworks will provide a platform for a concerted response. Support to building national capacity will continue to be the guiding principle of UNDP in these situations. When appropriate, UNDP itself will continue to deliver discrete programmes as part of wider, agreed frameworks, building on successful programmes of the past.

46. UNDP assistance to recovery will continue to be aimed at working with partners to bridge the gaps that emerge in processes of transition: providing institutional continuity; bridging the funding cycles between relief and longer-term reconstruction phases; and jump-starting the national capacity-building and local-ownership process. Because of its near universal presence and rapid disbursement ability, UNDP is well-placed to provide essential short-to-medium-term development assistance after a crisis strikes. It will then move into its more traditional capacity-building role when longer-term assistance can be made available by partners such as the World Bank and regional multilateral banks.

47. As part of a wider recovery framework and where requested by programme countries, UNDP work may include the following components, financed primarily by extrabudgetary resources, as has been the practice to date:

(a) **Reintegration of war and disaster-affected populations.** Support will focus on restoring the social and human capital of populations affected by war and disaster (e.g., returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and ex-combatants) through area and community-based approaches. The goal of these activities will be to contribute to political and economic stability by helping communities to reconstruct the systems, relationships and management structures that make sustainable recovery possible. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UNDP will also give priority to improving the conditions of and opportunities for women, with a view to increasing their access to political and economic power at all levels. UNCDF and others will continue to play a key role in supporting the implementation of the highly successful area development programme approach;

(b) **Infrastructure rehabilitation.** In the immediate aftermath of crisis, UNDP will help to promote peace and security through the rehabilitation of basic social and economic infrastructures. This may also include assistance to the reconstruction of physical infrastructure, such as schools, health centres, and community centres, to support overall social and economic rehabilitation;

(c) **Natural disasters.** Following natural, technological and environmental disasters, UNDP will aim to strengthen the capacity of national and community-level institutions for disaster-management and disaster-reduction measures, as part of recovery programmes. The goal is to ensure a sustainable reduction in disaster risks and vulnerabilities;

(d) **Mine-action capacity-building.** UNDP will continue to build national capacity for integrated, sustainable national and local mine-action programmes;

(e) **Rule of law.** Many conflicts arise when respect for the rule of law breaks down. This often occurs as a result of unsound legal, constitutional and institutional frameworks or the lack of implementation of more acceptable frameworks. Working with national authorities, UNDP will aim to assist them to develop legal frameworks consistent with international standards, support public institutions able to resolve conflicts peacefully, and strengthen indigenous mechanisms for conflict resolution. Other steps may include institutional and staffing capacities to implement legal reforms, including attention to customary law and traditional institutions. Further areas of action in coordination with national authorities may also include security-sector reform, national human rights institutions, reconciliation, and participation in the law and institutional reform process;

(f) **Public-sector capacity-building.** Macroeconomic stability and rehabilitation should be at the centre of the post-conflict reconstruction and development agenda. The OECD/DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation stress the need to mobilize expertise, at an early stage, to assist in this area in post-conflict situations. Experience has borne this out. In partnership with the World Bank, IMF and other major multilateral financial institutions, UNDP will support national efforts in the area of economic stabilization as part of the reconstruction agenda.

5. Improving the response capacity of UNDP

48. To deliver these much-needed services to countries in special development situations, and fulfil its responsibilities as a reliable partner at the inter-agency level, UNDP must continue to improve its performance and capacity.

49. First, UNDP needs to improve the speed of its response. Rapid response is not uniquely a requirement of relief agencies. In the context of assisting in bridging the gap from relief to development and jump-starting recovery processes, UNDP needs to move quickly when a crisis begins, primarily aiming to reinforce its country offices and resident coordinators on the ground — or to establish an office in situations such as Kosovo or East Timor, where none existed before. When a crisis begins, UNDP must become better able to take advantage of its continuous presence and move rapidly to support coordination systems, programme frameworks and partnerships needed to move past relief to recovery with minimum delay. In such work, UNDP will focus on development efforts while humanitarian actors treat the immediate effects of the crisis. UNDP will improve decision-making at headquarters to speed up response, including rapid deployment measures and special (temporary) programming regimes to back up the resident coordinator on the ground. Part of this effort is a growing number of standing agreements with partner organizations in Denmark, Norway and elsewhere. A special initiative with the United Nations Volunteers Programme is also expected to make a key contribution.

50. Second, it is crucial that the resources that are put in place are the right ones. Part of the UNDP wider learning and knowledge management effort is aimed at defining best practices in special development situations so that country offices have quick access to the latest thinking and most effective methodologies and strategies. Substantive back-up expertise in fields such as reintegration, mine action, disaster mitigation and the rule of law is being built up to provide this kind of support in these operations.

51. During the next three years, UNDP will also make substantial investments in its people, including intensified training, entry-level recruitment programmes and career counselling for work in special development situations. The Administrator is forging new relationships between staff and management, offering more growth opportunities for higher performance. A major initiative is to speed up and focus personnel procedures to address the demands of special development situations. But the overall commitment is to see that the competencies required to operate successfully in such circumstances are mainstreamed throughout the organization.

IV. Executive Board action

52. The Executive Board may wish to review the issues contained in the present report and to take note of its contents.